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Trial Opens in Slaying Of Mrs. Mary Meyer

By WILLIAM BASHAM
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alone at 1523 34th St. NW. She
was a niece of the late Gifford

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The U.S. District Court trial of a Washington man accused of murdering Mrs. Mary Pinchot Meyer last October 12 on the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal towpath began today.

The defendant, Ray Crump Jr., 28, of the 1900 block of Stanton Terrace SE, is charged in a first-degree murder indictment with shooting the attractive 43-year-old Washington artist as she walked along the towpath less than a mile above Key Bridge in the early afternoon.

Crump was arrested less than an hour after the shooting. A witness at the time said he saw a man stand over Mrs. Meyer's body, then run down an embankment beside the towpath and head in the direction of the Potomac River. The defendant was soaking wet when arrested according to police, but he denied knowledge of the shooting and said he fell into the canal while fishing.

Witnesses who worked at a nearby service station told police they heard a woman scream just before two shots were fired. One of the men said he ran across Canal Road and looked down to see a man standing over the victim's body. Mrs. Meyer, a divorcee, lived

Pinchot, the noted conservationist.

In the trial today before Judge Howard F. Corcoran, Assistant U. S. Attorney Alfred Hantman introduced more than 20 witnesses to the 60 prospective jurors, then questioned the jurors on their ability to judge the defendant impartially. Crump, a short man with a small mustache, was neatly dressed in a dark suit. He closely followed every question and answer.

When the government prosecutor asked if anyone had heard or read of the case, 23 jurors rose, the largest number to respond to that particular question in the memory of several court observers. Two men said they felt they could not fairly judge the evidence and a third, who attended the church of Defense Attorney Mrs. Dovey Roundtree for several years, said he felt he should not sit on the panel. Corcoran excused the three men.

In pretrial motions, Mrs. Roundtree argued that Crump did not get a proper preliminary hearing in which he was permitted to face all of his accu-